Details of these fires are given below :

Location	Reported year of start of fire
Nudkhurkee . . .	1952
Jogidih	1965
Kooridih . . .	1967
East Katras . . .	1951
West Mudidih . .	1957

(c) Since these fires were small and located in shallow outcrop regions of coal seams, these were dealt with by quenching with water, digging out followed by quenching with water and loading off the materials, isolation by trench cutting and blanketing with earth and matti to cut out supply of air.

(d) Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) have informed that no separate account of expenditure incurred on these fires was maintained. However, the total expenditure incurred to deal with the Jharia Coalfield fires is about Rs. 73 crores.

Coal production during the current financial year

1242. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether during the first five months of the current financial year, there was an increase in coal production ;

(b) if so, what was the total production of coal during this period and to what extent it was more in comparision with the corresponding period of last year ;

(c) what is the total target of coal production set for current financial year ;

(d) whether in view of this, Government have decided not to allow import of coal by various States ; and

(e) if so, what efforts are being made by Government to improve coal production in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) and (b) Coal production in the country during the first five months of current financial year and corresponding period of last year was as under :—

(million tonnes)

Period	Coal Production	Percentage increase
April—August, 1992 .	80.46	
April—August, 1993 (Provisional) . .	85.82	6.67

(c) The All India target of coal production for 1993-94 has been fixed at 249.24 million tonnes (including 4.00 million tonnes exposed coal).

(d) Coal has been placed under Open General Licence (OGL) and as such there is no need for any licence/permission from the Government of India for its import.

(e) Steps taken to augment coal production, inter-alia, include opening of new mines, modernisation of existing mines, application of new technologies to optimise production and ensuring timely availability of inputs and infrastructural facilities.

Piparwar Open Cast coal Project

1243. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) what is the present stage of Piparwar Open Cast coal project ;

(b) by when the project is expected to be completed ;

(c) what is the total sanctioned outlay of the project ;

(d) whether Government propose to introduce the similar modern technology in other coal mines ; and

(e) if so, by when ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) to (c) Implementation of Integerated Mine-cum-Beneficiation Project of Central Coalfields Limited (CCL) is progressing as per schedule and the project is expected to be completed by June,

1995. As per approved revised cost estimate, total sanctioned outlay of the project is Rs. 838.27 crores.

(d) and (e) Introduction of the similar modern techhnology in other opencast mines would depend on geomining factors as well as techno-economic viability of individual projects.

Cost-wise comparison of Coal Production with foreign Countries

1244. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) what is the cost of production of coal in the country ;

(b) how it compares with the cost of production of major coal producing countries especially China ;

(c) what are the details of the improvements made in this area over the last one decade ;

(d) what are the reasons for slow pace if improvement in this area ; and

(e) what steps are being taken by Government to reduce the cost of production of coal ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) and (b) The cost of production of coal in the mines of Coal India Ltd. during 1992-93 was Rs. 334.21 per tonne. The average cost for Singareni Collieries Company Ltd. coal for 1992-93 was Rs. 491.98 per tonne. The producers of coal in foreign countries treat the cost information as confidential and as such, no reliable data about cost of production in other countries is available.

(c) to (e) Various steps taken to increase efficiency and to reduce cost of production of coal in Coal India Ltd. include :

(i) Improved manpower planning including redeployment of surplus workers and restricting the intake of new employee against vacancies caused by natural wastage.

(ii) Reduction in manpower through voluntary retirement scheme.

(iii) The concept of 'all-men-all jobs' is being tried on an experimental basis.

(iv) Improvement in the availability and utilisation of equipment by providing adequate workshop support, improved management of spares and timely rehabilitation of equipments.

(v) Increase in production and productivity with special emphasis on underground mines.

(vi) A number of systems improvements and managerial measures have been adopted to improve efficiency of operations.

Efforts to improve the productivity and to control the cost is a continuous process for Coal India Ltd. management. For this purpose optimisation of output in relation to investment, manpower and other inputs is continuously strived. As a result, the rate of increase is the cost of production of coal during the last 10 years has been contained when compared against the rate of inflation measured in terms of increase in wholesale prices.

Coal production from Open Cast and underground mining as compared to China

1245. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) what is the productivity in the open cast Mines and underground mines in the country ; separately ;

(b) how these compare with some of the major coal producing countries especially China ;

(c) what are the reasons for low productivity in the Indian coal mines ; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to improve the productivity of coal mining especially in under-ground mines ?